

2:1; Matthew 24:11; Acts 20:30).

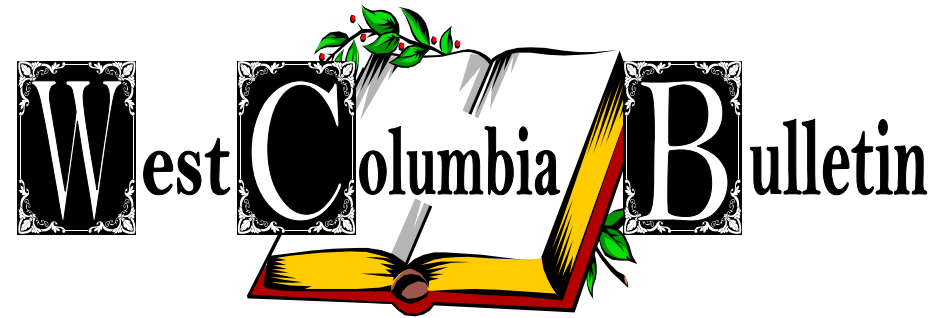
The devil is also miles ahead of us in the battle of faltering morals. He convinced Eve that death would not come from her sin (Genesis 2:17), while the Bible clearly says death is the result of all sin (Romans 6:23). The devil has been so successful in convincing people that sin is good and good is evil (Isaiah 5:20) that we must fight this pitched battle with all of the determination that we have in us. We have to work doubly hard to teach men and women that sin will condemn them eternally.

Marriage and the home have both imploded under the onslaught of the devil. Governments grant marriage rights to men living together as “husbands,” and women coupled as “wives,” while the Bible calls these practices sin (1 Corinthians 6:9; Romans 1:26-27). Millions of young people in America have no idea what it’s like to have two parents, a mother and a father, at home to guide them. Consequently, our society continues to degrade by the day. Abortion is scarcely an issue to anyone in 2020 other than to Christians. Every day, a new celebrity pronounces himself as some other gender than he was born, and then he demands people refer to him by meaningless pronouns (“they/them” rather than “him/he” or “her/she”). A celebrity recently expressed outrage at the whole concept of “gender reveal parties” which some parents hold. He opined that the child, once born, must be left to decide its own gender.

Churches are either held in suspicion today, or because of sectarianism the concept of one true church with no other headship than Christ is completely unknown to millions of people (Ephesians 1:22-23; Philippians 1:1). The devil has gotten far ahead of us on this and has convinced the world that denominationalism is the pattern of the Bible.

The plan of salvation has been savaged by the devil over the centuries. Now, every denomination has its own “plan” to be saved. And people almost universally reject the Lord’s plain plan of salvation out of hand. We must work extra hard to teach them that God requires gospel obedience (Hebrews 5:8-9).

Now, brethren, please do not think all hope is lost. The scriptures tell us that if we resist the devil he will flee from us (1 Peter 5:8-9; James 4:7). We must educate ourselves on the devil’s tactics (2 Corinthians 2:11), and then we must take the fight to him (Ephesians 6:10-17). Now is the time to fight with all we have in us. God has promised the defeat of the devil. He cannot win; we must not give up (Genesis 3:15; Luke 10:18).



December 6, 2020

Time's A-Wastin' And The Devil Has A Sizeable Lead

David Weaks

Many millions of people die every year; some from disease, and others from benign causes. If a year was measured by a giant cosmic hour glass, then each grain of sand that passed from top to bottom would represent thousands of lives being snuffed out every second.

Sobering stuff, to be sure. But, the “how” of people’s deaths is less important than that most people die unprepared for eternity. Right here in our little town hundreds of people die each year in need of the gospel.

This is staggering to think about. The gospel is the only hope the dying have for eternal life. That means the responsibility is yours and mine to save them before it is too late. The devil has been working at a feverish pace since his first attack on Eve. He will always

outpace our efforts to counter his evil doctrine.

Jesus compared the situation to a parade of people walking through life who come to a decision point: two paths (Matthew 7:13-14). Most people will enter through the wide gate that leads to destruction and few will go through the narrow gate that leads to life. The devil has convinced people that the wide gate - *the easy way* - is preferable to the restrictive pathway of the Lord.

The devil has worked feverishly to convince people that there is no God. We must hit the ground running to catch up with him on this point. Many of the people in your life either doubt God outright or they doubt what the Bible says about Him. The devil has successfully wooed a weak world with false teachers who deny the Lord who bought them (2 Peter

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Schedule Of Services...

Sunday:

Bible Classes	9:00 a.m.
Worship	9:50 a.m.
Worship	6:00 p.m.

Wednesday: Bible Classes 7:00 p.m.

Fear Of Death Won't Stop Me

David Weak

The news about the current pandemic of the Covid-19 virus changes almost daily. One day we get hopeful news that pharmaceutical companies in several countries are about to deliver billions of doses of a vaccine which is "95% effective" against the disease to

the citizens of the world. The next day we hear that it will be months before ordinary people have access to the vaccine. Meanwhile the nightly news is top heavy with dire reports of rising numbers of infections and deaths in the U.S. Each day seems to be a new record setting day, and incendiary politicians are vowing to shut down states again, which will mean an even more wrecked economy, business closures, and families without a means of support.

I was curious how the numbers reported about Covid-19 stack up against other threats to life and limb every year in the world and in America. Here is what I found.

Deaths Globally Per Year:

(source: <http://needtoknow.nas.edu/id/threats/global-killers/>)

Traffic accident: 1.35 million deaths. 3,700 deaths worldwide per day.

Cancer: 9.5 million deaths.

Lower respiratory diseases (pneumonia): 4 million deaths

Diarrheal diseases (dysentery, etc): 1.5 million deaths.

HIV: 1 million deaths.

Tuberculosis: Every 6 seconds someone contracts TB worldwide. Infections per year are roughly 6 million annually, and 1.5 million deaths per year.

Malaria: 440,000 deaths annually.

Influenza: 250,000-500,000 deaths worldwide annually.

Abortion: 40 million deaths worldwide annually.

Homicide: 400,000 deaths worldwide annually.

Deaths In The U.S. Per Year:

(source: CDC)

Heart disease: 655,381 deaths/yr.

Abortion: 614,820 deaths/yr.

Cancer: 599,274 deaths/yr.

Accidents (unintentional injuries): 167,127 deaths/yr.

Chronic lower respiratory diseases (pneumonia, etc): 159,486 deaths/yr.

Stroke (cerebrovascular diseases): 147,810 deaths/yr.

Alzheimer's disease: 122,019 deaths/yr.

Diabetes: 84,946 deaths/yr.

Influenza: 59,120 deaths/yr.

Nephritis, nephrotic syndrome, and nephrosis (kidney diseases): 51,386 deaths/yr.
Intentional self-harm (suicide): 48,344

Take a look at these two lists. They represent merely a partial list of the many ways people die other than from old age. These would be things most people call "tragic." I added up the two lists and here is what I found:

- **Global deaths by various causes:** 60,440,000 per year (that's 60.4 million deaths, folks...each year).

- **U.S. deaths by various diseases:** 2,709,713.

Please note that neither list includes the Covid-19 virus numbers. This is intentional. I wanted to know what people worldwide and in the US have been coping with for centuries before anyone ever heard of Covid-19.

What I have concluded from all of this information is that I will die from something, maybe something painful and tragic, or maybe it will be something benign. This is not news to me, because I have been taught this in the Bible. Paul said: *"And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment,"* (Hebrews 9:27). Nine times in Genesis 5 and 9 I have been told that even in the lives of those patriarchs who lived tremendously long lives, they all finished in the same place: *"and he died"* (Genesis 5:5, 8, 11, 14, 17, 20, 27, 31; 9:29).

What shall I do when I scan the landscape and observe all of the diseases and mutations of diseases that are waiting to take my life with each breath I take? The government wants me to stay away from everyone and everything, and isolate myself for long periods of time. Yes, folks, isolation is a Biblical technique for dealing with diseases, but it was always temporary (Leviticus 7:4, 5).

Here is the other side of the coin. I am a Christian, and that puts me in the people business. My duty is to work with people. There must be some level of contact between myself and other people in order to teach them the gospel (John 4:4-26; Acts 8:29-38). Also, I must have some level of contact with my brethren in order to provoke them unto love and good works (Hebrews 10:23-25).

Moreover, I must worship with the saints on the first day of the week (Acts 2:42; 20:7). All of these instructions from the scripture mean that pandemic or no pandemic, I cannot isolate myself permanently from people for fear of sickness. Any isolation must be temporary at most. Churches "went online" back in April, and many are still conducting their worship and studies this way. Brethren, this is not "assembling" (Hebrews 10:25). It is a poor substitute for what we are commanded in the Bible to do. Unfortunately, many elders and preachers are worrying that this has become so commonplace and that brethren have grown comfortable watching worship on TV rather than participating together and *"provoking one another unto love and good works."* More than a few brethren have expressed their fear that some Christians will never come back. This is a genuine concern.

My faith must be stronger than my fear. Brethren, I am taking the virus seriously. I wear a mask everywhere. I sanitize everything. Yet, I am aware that I might get Covid-19 anyway. I also